The BLAST

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The Vice Clean-Up

"But what other work can I get to do?"
"Well, I hear they need new witnesses against Mooney."

In the Shadow of the Gallows

Robert Minor

A NERVOUS, pale-faced crowd of Tom Mooney's friends hastened back to the courtroom after a quick meal in coffee houses, whilst the jury was dining in charge of the bailiff and guarding the secret of Mooney's fate. The dimly lighted room was soon filled with faces full of question and of pallor, offset here and there by the cynical smiles of detectives.

A bailiff whose heart seems still to reside with him despite his profession, showed a visage upon which was written tragedy. "Where's the judge? There will be a verdict in ten minutes. Get the lawyers, quick!" The tensest hour I have ever known, filled by a thousand sobs from Rena Mooney's sister, trembling efforts of Annie Mooney to smile, and the low unconscious moaning of "Mother" Mooney, displaced the expected ten-minute wait.

The courtroom is different from its usual appearance at night. It seems puzzlingly unofficial. For one thing, an assistant district attorney's wife was not there, alaughing at a man's plea for his life.

Assistant Prosecutor Brennan came in waddling, contented, eager. He sat in a juryman's chair, miscellaneous attaches gathering around him. District Attorney Fickert entered grinning. Assistant District Attorney Cunha seated himself and called a giant plainclothes man, whom he carefully placed between himself and the defendant's friends. The big "bull" completely covered Cunha's little body from sight. By these signs, hope was given farewell. Rumors of the worst sort flew from whisperer to whisperer. We lied to "Mother" Mooney. Some one sent a new and conclusive word across the room.

The coarse, metallic laugh of Jim Brennan, lolling back in the juror's chair, broke the semi-quiet. Then we knew that Tom Mooney was slated to die. Cunha looked coyly from behind his big policeman, toward "Mother" Mooney who rocked back and forth in her place, moaning, moaning with her eyes closed.

The Judge was fetched.

The jury came in. William V. MacNevin, real estate man, held the verdict in his hand. He was foreman; I wondered why.

"We, the jury, find the defendant—find Thomas J. Mooney, the defendant in the above mentioned cau—where do I begin to read?—find the defendant guilty of murder in the first degree." His fumbling hands could hardly hold the shaking paper. Mr. MacNevin, real estate man, looked at the Judge, and the Judge didn't look very happy or triumphant; and then MacNevin looked at the crowd and changed his eyes quickly to the face of Cunha.

"Guilty?" I think every friend in the room asked himself, "guilty?" Isn't it possible that he said "not guilty?" Didn't we miss the word "not"?

Annie Mooney screamed. "Mother" Mooney's moaning changed to a shriek that seemed to come from a thousand mothers' hearts. Mrs. Weinberg arose, stood for a moment dumb, then fell without a sound upon the floor.

Above the confusion rose the bellow of Fickert: "Get 'em out o' here!" They dragged "Mother" Mooney out by the arms, and Annie and Mrs. Weinberg were carried out.

There was but one calm man in the room. It was Tom Mooney. Standing erect, he looked for a moment at William MacNevin, real estate man, and then Tom smiled and turned about. "Don't cry, Sis, it's all right. Don't cry, Mother." The handcuffs closed about his wrists and Tom disappeared through the door that leads to—

The "bulls" were driving the crowd out. The bulls were happy, triumphant. "Get them out of here," shouted Fickert, with clenched fists and a grin. Suddenly he found himself facing Rena Mooney's sister. She looked at him. Fickert turned away and for the moment stopped his grinning. The "bulls" didn't even hesitate to lay hands upon the lawyers of the defense. It was their day, and they always have resented Mooney's having a defense.

The newspaper men stopped their interviewing of ex-jurymen for a moment while the wail of Annie Mooney echoed through the corridors and died out as she was carried through the door below.

"Puff!" of a flashlight; William V. MacNevin, real estate man, is having his picture taken, standing just right, as the newspaper photographer instructed him, with the paper in his hand upon which was written "We, the jury—" The last of them filed out. The courtroom was still, scraps of paper on the floor, an upset chair, and an overturned cuspidor, in the dim light.

The next day many compliments were given. We heard some of them about the saloons in Real Estate Row. "Good boy, Mac, you done your duty. We'll get you back on the Real Estate Board"! The remarks were addressed to William V. MacNevin, real estate man. Later Mr. MacNevin replied to a question (the question being unheard), "Well, I don't know as I will make as much money out of it, anyway, as I lost by serving on the jury."

So was Tom Mooney condemned to die, "hanged by the neck until dead."

The means used to this purpose have not been limited by anything but the bounds of the imagination of the tools of the "Frame-Up System." When once the "slimy mind of Private Detective Martin Swanson" decided upon this opportunity to destroy the enemies of Swanson's masters, there was nothing too vile to be used to that end. The heat from the fire of the bomb had hardly cooled from the concrete pavement before sledgehammer and crowbar were put to work to manufacture an artificial "scene of the explosion" to be photographed by the police as fake evidence. This happened within a few minutes of the time that Swanson was put to work on the case, and the place was in charge of the famous "Frame-Up Steve" Bunner when the sledgehammer work was done.

The Frame-Up System gets witnesses exactly as a stage manager recruits a stock company—by simply hiring them. It was with an offer of $5,000 that Swanson tried four times during the week preceding this explosion to get Arthur Silkwood, Billings and then Weinberg to sell Mooney into his hands for alleged streetcar strike activity. So were witnesses recruited with which to convict Billings for the bomb crime, as Billings had refused to sell Mooney; and thus also is to be kept Swanson's promise to revenge himself upon Weinberg for refusing to sell Mooney.

Seventeen thousand dollars were offered as a reward for evidence against "the perpetrators of the bomb crime." A beautiful collection of: one prostitute, her mother, one convict, one drug victim, one live-by-his-wits private detective out of a job, and two women of unenviable standing—was brought to the "Stock Company" to play the death play against Billings. Billings was duly convicted upon the words of this crew, although each contradicted the others, and it was proven that at least one of them was testifying for cash in hand. The criminal records of these persons were successfully concealed until after the conviction of Billings.

As soon as the characters of the State's witnesses against Billings were fully ascertained, several of them were dropped and a new set was procured for the trial of Mooney. On and on they go, with a new set of perjurers for each of the five victims.

Estelle Smith, once indicted for murder, arrested in a bawdy house in Los Angeles, and notoriously lacking in veracity, was

discarded as a witness, after convicting Billings and then having her reputation uncovered. Her mother, Mrs. Allie Kidwell, was discharged from her witness job even before the Billings trial, because the defense found a letter written by her telling how she was to receive as a reward for her testimony the pardon of her husband in Folsom penitentiary. It is not known whether her brother, who is in San Quentin, was also to be released or not.

John Crowley, who served to convict Billings by swearing that he saw the boy, a block away from the scene of crime, refuse to take his hat off when the band played the "Star Spangled Banner"—John Crowley was dropped as a witness because the defense had turned up the fact that he was an ex-convict for having given the syphilis to a seventeen year old girl, and that he was out on parole from another conviction for stealing a watch at the time he testified.

Louis Rominger was fired from his job as a witness against Mooney because, since he testified in the Billings case, the defense had published its proof that he had first declared Billings not to be the man he had seen, and that later he changed his statements upon the importunity of an assistant district attorney and of his fellow witness and friend, Estelle Smith.

Mrs. Mellie Edeau and her daughter Sadie were not discharged from their positions as witnesses, but merely given new lines to speak upon the stage that is called the witness stand. Each one suddenly remembered a lot of new things, Sadie explaining that she had not at first told the detectives because they had called **"so near church time"** that she hadn't time enough to tell it all. Her mother, however, assured the court that she had **"told an elder of her church"** all about it, and that "she didn't want no blood money."

John McDonald, the star witness of the Billings case, was kept on the job for the hanging of Mooney. Before being allowed to "go east on the cushions with plenty of change in his pockets," as he had explained to his friends, however, John had to change his story in two respects. For the defense had discovered that the district attorney had defrauded them in the Billings case by the suppression of photographs of Tom Mooney on the roof of his home at the very moment that John, the cocaine-sniffer, saw him a mile and a quarter away at the scene of crime. The prosecution had been ordered to turn these photographs over to the defense, but they had served their case and convicted Billings by fading the photographs out until the time could not be discerned on the street clocks showing in the pictures. Before Mooney came to trial, the defense discovered that fraud and forced the police to allow the great hand-writing expert, Theodore Kytka, to make enlargements from the films. These enlargements showed that Mooney was on the roof of his home at two minutes to two o'clock, one minute past two, three minutes past two, and four minutes past two. So John McDonald changed his testimony in the Mooney case, blandly denying what he had said in the Billings trial and placing the time that he said he saw Mooney, at sixteen minutes earlier.

When the defense announced the deciphering of the time on the street clock as one minute past two, the prosecutors published the statement that they had a witness to swear that Mooney entered his home at two o'clock. And we don't doubt that this witness would have appeared on the stand, had not the prosecution discovered later that the defense had also made out the time on the other picture as 1:58. So the two o'clock witness was dropped.

John McDonald had sworn in the first trial that Mooney and Billings both left the scene by "crossing the street through the parade" on foot, going each in a different direction. The discovery of the aforesaid clocks, however, did not leave sufficient time for Mooney and his wife to travel from the crime scene to their home on foot, so this time John McDonald swore that he did not see them "cross the street through the parade," but lost sight of them on the near side of the street, together.

Thereupon appears Frank C. Oxman, "worthy of credence," as the district attorney shouted, because he was "worth a million dollars, a wealthy cattleman from Oregon." The story of Oxman is not fully known at present, but rumor has it that a prominent keeper of redlight cafes turned him over to Fickert to use as a witness to hang Mooney. We do know this much: that that cafe-keeper was in need of Fickert's favor at the time, for the Rev. Paul Smith's vice crusade was on. And the resort-keeper got the favor, too, for his resorts have not been closed, as have nearly all others.

"Frame-Up Steve" Bunner it was who went to Oregon after the cattleman-witness. That in itself was suspicious; but what can you prove? Oxman blandly took the stand and supplied EVERY MISSING LINK IN THE STATE'S CASE. He swore that he saw all four of the defendants (except Nolan, whom the prosecution wants to let out as sop to Labor Unions) at the scene of the crime. Perfection itself falls short of the testimony given by Oxman. He assured everyone that he was a "country gentleman," and that he loved his wife and was rich. Under cross-examination he pulled from his pocket a telegraph envelope on which was written the number of Israel Weinberg's jitney bus! He had even taken the number of the automobile, "thinking those fellows had stolen the suitcase." Hardly ever has so dramatic a scene been witnessed as that when Oxman pulled from his pocket this damning bit of "proof." Hope fled from the room and the vision of five bloody nooses took its place.

Tom Mooney was condemned to death upon the word of Frank C. Oxman. No matter that John McDonald had contradicted Oxman; no matter that Oxman lied in saying that Captain Matheson was not in uniform, and Captain Matheson said that he was; no matter that it was impossible for a jitney bus to go down Market street at the time that the parade was in motion, and in violation of every police regulation; and no matter that Tom Mooney was known to every policeman on the street, as the recent streetcar strike leader, and would have been stopped for that fact alone.

Nor did it matter that the defense proved by photographs and the evidence of a City Supervisor, a police chauffeur, a reporter for the *Oakland Tribune*, another for the *Chronicle*, and a newspaper photographer, that it was **they themselves** who went down Market street at that time seated in the automobile exactly as Oxman described the Mooney party. No matter that Supervisor Andrew J. Gallagher answered the description of "a fat-faced man" that Oxman gave of Mooney; Spangler, the *Tribune* reporter, being wonderfully like Billings and exactly his size; and the police chauffeur is amazingly like Weinberg! No matter that it was proven by photographs that no other automobile was at that corner, during any of the time mentioned by Oxman, except that official car driven by the police chauffeur! No matter anything, for the Chamber of Commerce jury, a business man's jury, wanted but an excuse to hang the "agitator."

Tom Mooney stands condemned to death on the word of Frank C. Oxman, who appeared to be drunk on the witness stand. It is a choice in San Francisco between the professional jury of hungry two-dollar-a-day graft-seekers and the jury chosen from the Chamber of Commerce and business element.

This is the Frame-Up System! By switching witnesses, putting on a new set as fast as the old are found out; by "planting" evidence! A retarding coil from a telephone switchboard was "planted" at the scene two days after the crime and offered as an exhibit of a "dry-cell battery!" Just as catalogs from the Hercules Power Co., "planted" in Mooney's studio when Martin Swanson searched it in Mooney's absence, were shown to the jury and then quickly withdrawn when Mr. Cockran made his attack upon the Swanson frame-up. Just as Oxman was aided to identify Mooney by being shown the number of his cell on the roster of prisoners, looked at Mooney locked alone in his cell, and then "identified" him by the **number of his cell.** In this same way the Edeau women, the Smith woman,

the Kidwell woman, McDonald the cocaine-sniffer, and all the rest, "identified" all of the prisoners by having them pointed out to them, and even introduced to them by name so that they could identify them and earn the reward money.

Twenty-five witnesses and seven photographs proved that Mooney was not at the scene of the crime. But the jury believed Oxman, the "home-loving cattleman"; and Mooney was condemned to drop through the death trap at the end of a tarred rope.

And Fickert, the same prosecutor who had laughed in old "Mother" Mooney's face upon the death sentence of her son, took advantage of the blow of the conviction to announce in the next morning's papers that a tremendous conspiracy of "anarchistic criminals" all through the United States was soon to be proven and the anarchists rounded up and hanged. Frank C. Oxman had done his work well. The resort-keeper is running at full blast, and William V. MacNevin, real estate man, is to be given back his place on the Real Estate Board for his services as foreman of the jury.

Then suddenly the frame-up of the Oxman testimony was exposed!

Mrs. R. E. Le Posee, wife of a shoe clerk, happened to remember Frank C. Oxman. He had come into a drygoods store where Mrs. Le Posee worked in Portland, Oregon—had come in with a woman to buy a dress, and the woman had whispered to Mrs. Le Posee that she had a "live one," and to bring out something worth while. Later Mrs. Le Posee happened to be in a cafe in company with her husband and to have seen the "home-loving cattleman" makes signals to a female entertainer by holding up "five fingers twice."

The pitiful fact, the desperate situation in which a labor man is placed in trying to defend himself, is illustrated by the fear that Mrs. Le Posee had that her husband would lose his job if she dared to tell the truth. (See in this issue the letter of a policeman engaged in the frame-up, who cannot tell, because he would lose his job.) Mrs. Le Posee was in the court-room when Oxman testified. She had seen him a mile away at exactly the time that Oxman was supposed to be identifying the Mooney party at the scene of the crime. Mrs. Le Posee had a long, hard struggle with her conscience before she came forward, but her husband happened to have an honest employer who promised that Le Posee would not lose his job for his wife's telling the truth. And so it seems, and so we hope, that Tom Mooney's life is to be saved from the Frame-Up System by this new discovery.

But now we hear that the police are besieging the little woman in her home, threatening her there and threatening her husband at his place of employment.

Is there any depth to which they will not stoop? To hire witnesses, buy witnesses, trade red-light favors for the testimony of cafe drunks!

"It isn't your bloody noose about my neck that hurts," said Tom Mooney. "It's the knowledge that men can be so base."

So we hope for a new trial for Mooney. Surely Judge Griffin, who has had the courage to defy some of the most disreputable acts of the prosecution, will have the courage now to grant Tom Mooney another trial. And you, Labor, must keep your shoulder to the wheel, support this fight now, and we may yet win.

Tom Mooney says: "There is just one place to which we can look for any aid, and that is the united efforts of Organized Labor. John Lawson, one of the biggest labor men in Colorado, was headed for the gallows, as I now am, because he dared raise his voice in behalf of the toilers. He is a free man today and he owes that freedom to Organized Labor. That alone saved him, and that alone can help us."

Will You Be Man Enough to Come Forward?

ON June 27th, 1916, Jim Larkin addressed a meeting in the Dreamland Rink, San Francisco. At the close of the address, a group of enthusiastic persons gathered round shaking hands and voicing their opinion on the subject matter delivered. A number of cards, copies of papers and letters were given to the speaker, who without perusing them, packed them into his bag and adjourned with a few friends to the Hotel Fresno in Eddy street. Upon examining the various documents, etc., in the collection, Larkin came upon a writing, which conveyed a message warning the writer as a fellow countryman from associating with Tom Mooney and his brother. Speaking from memory, the writing ran as follows:

"As a fellow countryman and member of the Clan-na-Gael for some time, not at present in good standing financially, but still at heart a Fenian and understanding that you are engaged in working for Ireland and being still sound at heart though I am twenty years from the old sod, and above all as a Catholic, I want to warn you as to a conspiracy organized and paid for by the U. R. Company of this city. Though I myself am engaged with others from the office of Chief of Police, there are few of us have our hearts in the job. The worst element in the group are the private detectives employed by the United Railroads, though the private men of the Pacific Gas Company don't come far short in villainy with the others. We of the official element get our instructions direct from the office of the M. & M. Employers' Association. The Main Guy in the conspiracy is a prominent member of the K. C. Of course, he is only in that organization for his own purpose. This lad was working for Attorney Fickert in the election. He is also employed or was doing work for the British Consul watching supposed dynamiters. Two other detectives are conductors on the Municipal cars and there are over half a dozen working as conductors on the United Railway. I saw two of these fellows shaking hands with you on Sunday at the picnic. One of them was along with Mooney. Now, the arrangement is to get the two Mooneys by fair means or foul. They have already tried to buy over some of Mooney's associates, others they have threatened with imprisonment. A report has been made to them that you have come on here to work at organizing the employees of the United Railways. You are followed everywhere. Mind yourself, especially on the waterfront. A fight will be started wherever you are, you will be invited to speak to the striking Longshoremen. Don't accept. It is a frame-up. They want to frighten you out of the city. They fear your influence among the Irish, but they mean TO GET MOONEY. Now, I don't like Tom Mooney. Jack Mooney is a decent fellow and I want to see him saved. Still I would not like to see harm come to Tom, though he is given to blowing off his head. Therefore, warn Mooney and those who are with him. They are not frightened by Berkman; they know he has no influence among the Unions, but Mooney is the dangerous man and there are people in the Central Labor Council who want to see him go over the road, along with a fellow named Nolan, who has been out of the state for some time, and another, named Sheehan, a sailor. They boast they can get Johannsen whenever they care to. A certain shipping firm is especially interested in Nolan. There was a report that you were in the home of a man out of the checking department of the United Railways; this man speaks with a strong Scotch accent, and he is being watched. I was glad to shake you by the hand on Sunday and some day I hope to make myself known to you. For though I am engaged in this dirty business, Jim, I have to feed a wife and a number of children, two of whom are in the high school. When they are educated, I will give up this cursed job and become a man again. Again, I warn you: Keep away from the waterfront and tell Nolan not to go out by himself under any circumstances." Beanacht Lait, "One of the Clan."

Will the writer of the above letter show himself a man, now that the victim has been framed up for the gallows? Don't be afraid! Others have renounced the dirty work and lived. Won't you be a man?

PRISON MEMOIRS OF AN ANARCHIST

By Alexander Berkman

"This is the only book that I know which goes deeply into the corrupting, demoralizing psychology of prison life."

—Hutchins Hapgood.

512 pages, illustrated. $1.40 postpaid.

How a Fake Witness Was Unmasked

MRS. R. E. LE POSEE has gone through days of terror and nights of wakefulness, believing herself the possessor of knowledge upon which the life of one man, and perhaps more, might hang.

She attended the trial of Tom Mooney until the prosecution's case was complete, when she says she decided that the case against Mooney was so weak that the jury could not possibly convict.

She says she resolved to remain silent from fear that her husband would lose his job.

When Mrs. Le Posee discovered that the verdict had been "guilty," without recommendation for mercy, she went to the telephone to place her story before Attorney Maxwell McNutt.

"There was no answer at his office and I looked up the Mooneys' telephone in the book. I called there and they said the phone had been temporarily discontinued. I called up the Palace and asked for Mr. Cockran. They said he had gone. Then I decided that it was fate and I would keep out. I kept thinking perhaps Judge Griffin would not sentence him to hanging and I would wait until today and see. I don't know what I can do now. It is terrible. I don't want to be mixed up in it, but what am I to do?"

Mrs. Le Posee is the wife of a salesman with Sommer & Kauffman. With her husband and her little boy she came to San Francisco from Portland. According to her story, she and her husband and the child went to Market street to see the Preparedness parade, leaving the Mentone Hotel about 1:15.

"It was the boy's birthday. We had dinner and a birthday cake and ice cream. When we finished we started right away so we would be in plenty of time. We stopped near the clock near Haas' candy store.

"In the crowd a man stepped on my shoe. I had on new shoes, and I mentioned it to my husband. Being the wife of a shoeman, I suppose I am a little particular about my shoes.

"He told me they could not be fixed. When I looked up at the man I recognized him. I had a business transaction with him in Portland, but did not know his name. I was working in a store in Portland selling suits. A man and woman came in one day, and I remembered them specially because the whole transaction was so raw. The woman whispered to me. 'I've got a live one. Show me the best you've got in the house.' There was a dress with a pm on it. That means that you get a dollar extra for selling it. I showed her that. She asked the man if he wanted to come into the dressing-room and see it tried on and he followed her. I also saw him at other times in Portland.

"That night I told my husband that I had sold a pm and made an extra dollar and I told him about the 'live one.'

"After that we were down at a grill one night and I saw one of the entertainers making signs. I turned around and saw the 'live one' sitting at a table. Then he held up five fingers twice in succession and she nodded.

"'There's the live one,' I told my husband.

"The next time I saw him was that day of the parade in San Francisco, when he stepped on my foot. He stood there beside us and when the policemen came on horses and my little boy asked to be lifted up, he took him in his arms and held him up above the crowd. I had been holding him and my arms were tired.

"We stayed there until the flag came along and then we tried to get into Haas' to get something cold. He was still there when we left. This must have been fully 2 o'clock.

Sees Oxman on Stand

"When the Mooney trial started I went to court just to hear what was going on. One day I noticed that 'the live one' was sitting in a seat not far from me. It never occurred to me to think he was a witness because I had heard all witnesses ordered from the court and he was there listening to the testimony. When they put him on the stand I couldn't believe my eyes. He was Oxman. When I heard him tell about all those things happening which I knew were not true because he was standing right beside me all the time he said he was watching the automobile, I wanted to get right up in court and call him a liar.

"Then I thought about my husband's job and how we were trying to get along and that this might queer everything for us; so I decided to wait. Then I thought that of course nobody would believe his testimony because it seemed to me no man living could see all he said he saw in that much time.

"I told my husband about it, but he told me to keep out of things and keep my mouth shut. He wasn't sympathetic, so I didn't say any more about it. I couldn't keep still, for I was so excited, so I told Mr. Klein, who lives in the Mentone, and Mr. Bowering, the manager.

"I didn't want to come into it. I saw some of those other women in court and I saw how the District Attorney got them all mixed up. I didn't know what to do. Finally I stayed away from court because it got me so upset.

"I wish I could keep out now. I don't want to get into the papers. I have my little boy and we are just getting a start. I have to keep him with my mother now most of the time so we can get along and I hate to have anything come up. I don't see what I can do, but I can't keep silent any more.

"I didn't want my husband to lose his job. I knew the Mooneys were with Labor and I thought maybe it might hurt him if I said anything on that side."

Mrs. Le Posee told her story in her room at the Mentone Hotel. Coffee was bubbling in a small percolator on the table and she was waiting for her husband to return for luncheon.

She agreed to see a reporter only after her husband had telephoned to her. Word of the situation got to *The Bulletin* office from a guest in the hotel who had become aware of the situation.

The Bulletin discovered first that a man by the name of Le Posee was employed at Sommer & Kauffman's. They sent for Mr. Sommer, who heard the story and sent for Le Posee. Mr. Sommer assured Le Posee that his position would not be jeopardized in the slightest by any truth which he and his wife might tell.

Even then Le Posee seemed to fear the consequences of revealing anything tending to discredit the testimony offered in the Mooney case.

He telephoned his wife at Mr. Sommer's suggestion and over the telephone she reiterated her statement that Oxman was the man to whom she had sold clothes in Portland and that he stood near them during the entire time that he claims to have been on lower Market street.

Her husband seems not to have known that she had talked to others. When he arrived at the hotel he said:

"Why didn't you tell me you had told these other men?"

"Because you were not sympathetic. You wanted me to keep still. I had to talk to someone," she said.

While Mrs. Le Posee talked to a reporter, Attorney Maxwell McNutt and Attorney J. G. Lawlor, having heard the story from one of the men to whom she told it, arrived and interviewed her preparatory to taking her affidavit.

Why I Don't Come to America

Bernard Shaw

"MY anxiety lest I should disappoint America sometimes starts a train of thought which ends in my wondering whether America ever feels at all anxious as to whether it might disappoint me. If Americans knew anything about America, they would exclude all visitors until they had put their house in order. But I never yet met an American who had any notion of the institutions of his native land beyond a general and mostly erroneous idea that they are glorious.

"They do not know the risks they are asking me to run when they invite me to cross the Atlantic. They do not know that I should not be allowed to land if I told the truth about my political and religious convictions, or perhaps they never heard of any one telling the truth about such matters. They do not know that opinions on marriage and the population question would expose me to several years' imprisonment. They do not know that I quite frequently take railway journeys with ladies to whom I am not married (an abandoned practice common in Europe), and that for this I might in America end my days in a felon's cell.

"They do not know that in many states the purchase of a smart tie or the accidental protrusion from my pocket of an attractively colored handkerchief (and, until the war cut us off from German dyes, my ties and handkerchiefs were the stupefaction of London) would consign me to the penitentiary, if a policeman detected a lady in the act of admiring them.

"But I know all these things, and a good many more of the same sort, and they naturally make me nervous. If President Wilson will give me a safe conduct, insuring my return from the lines of American morality, I shall be much more likely to trust myself to the eagle's beak."

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Comments

Dishonorable "Honor"

COUNT VON BERNSTORFF, representing his imperial majesty, Wilhelm II, has been handed his passports. The people of the United States should never have had any representative of the tyrant Kaiser in their midst. But the severing of diplomatic relations is supposed to forecast war.

The war, so far as actual participation is concerned, will necessarily be a farce.

But the real horror of this impending declaration is the psychological change to be expected here at home. Every murder lust will have license, every Rooseveltian cave-man liar can spit blood in public and be acclaimed a hero; every expression of calmness, of breadth of mind, of decent brotherly love, will be branded as treason. It may even go so far as the hanging or imprisonment of every fine-spirited man and woman in the country. It will be an era of the skull-chewing and gut-spilling in life and literature. That will be the saddest part of it all.

And when it is over (which we hope will be in a very few months) the capitalist class of this country will find itself in the saddle with a standing army of a million or more to keep labor totally shackled for the industrial depression after the war.

What will Class Conscious Labor do? We have scorned European labor for its craven part. Will we do better?

The Battle With the Lumber Kings

ALL our readers should be familiar by this time with the story of the labor war centering about Everett, Washington. THE BLAST has become almost a local paper in recent times by the very necessity of the terrible struggle now going on in San Francisco. But we should not overlook the fact that a fight bigger in the number of lives envolved, if narrower in scope, is being fiercely waged in the Great Northwest. It is a combat which we cannot afford to neglect. Seventy-four men of the boldest type of working class warriors have their lives at stake! And the issue is a clear one, unbefogged by any suspicion of undeservedness.

Seventy-four defenses, even though they be without much truckling to lawyers, will cost an immense sum of money. That money must be forthcoming. Labor must respond.

It is a splendid opportunity for American Labor to show any backbone which it may possess. What a pity that Labor does not free such prisoners by means of its infallible weapon—the General Strike!—but since Labor will not use that weapon, let Labor come forth with full support of a legal defense.

Direct Action

THREE years ago a frail little woman decided to overthrow a great injustice or give her life in the attempt. Margaret Sanger took up the struggle to stop the reign of ignorance in matters so vital to the mothers of the poor as sex hygiene, especially "birth control." The law is deaf and blind. The monster of Intolerance set itself to crush her. But Margaret Sanger didn't mind being crushed, thrust herself into danger, defied the savage law of ignorance. And the blind beast saw.

Many individuals have in turn fought this fight. Emma Goldman, Ben Reitman, Ida Rauh, Jessie Ashley, Bolton Hall, and Mrs. Sanger's sister, Ethel Byrne, have each received the heavy blow of the blind beast. But there is a limit to the blindness of even the public, and at last it has quailed before the choice of crushing a sincere woman willing to be crushed, and turning in its path.

So the machinery of the State of New York is creaking and groaning to find a way to avoid sending Margaret Sanger to jail to starve to death on hunger strike. It seems that the law will be repealed by the greatest of all legislatures: Direct Action.

All Hail—The Irish Worker

Jim Larkin has just issued the third number of *The Irish Worker*. In it the Irish radical movement finds a worthy champion and a reflection of the gallant spirits who last Easter week "had not the strength to wait, but only strength to die." Too long the splendid spirit of progressive Ireland has been exploited by Irish ward-heelers and soul-grinding Irish employers of the Ryan and Crimmins type. In his arduous task of dispelling the fog of economic ignorance from the ranks of the Irish workers here, the redoubtable Irish fighter deserves the co-operation of every radical in America. *The Irish Worker* is a well printed illustrated weekly of twenty-four pages, and is published at 1046 North Franklin street, Chicago. Its subscription rates are $2 a year; six months, $1. The Blasters congratulate Comrade Larkin on his enterprise and assure him of their loyal support. Faugh-a-Ballagh!

India and Ireland

THOSE Anglomaniacs who are rapturously applauding the imminence of war with Germany and our government's consequent alliance with England, "the protector and guiding star of small nations," should be handed a copy of that excellent illustrated pamphlet, *India Against Britain*, written and published by Ram Chandra, editor of the *Hindustan Gadar*, San Francisco.

In the world's history England's government ranks as the most arbitrary despot of colonial powers. Before the development of machinery, England was a comparatively happy country and its sturdy yeomanry was eulogized in song and story. With industrial growth grew its monopolists—with its overproduction grew its necessity for more and more markets and with its accumulation of territory grew its total disregard of the rights and liberties of smaller nations. In most of its wars of aggrandizement, its most potent weapon has been the machine gun.

In India, the British government's favorite weapon was artificial famine. Next was its stimulation of caste differences. I well remember being told at Irish firesides how, during the dark days of the Irish Famine of '41, the Sultan of Turkey was desirious of sending a ship-load of food to the starving Irish. The British Ambassador vetoed it at once. "Why, your Royal Highness," he urged, "the humane English people and their Queen shall never allow the Irish Race to perish whilst there is a loaf of bread in Britain." But whilst Merrie England ate its roast beef, the Irish died by the roadside eating grass.

In like manner India has been depopulated, whilst English rulers waxed fat on the country's wealth. India has been taxed to death and its people have been goaded to the point where honorable death has been preferable to the abject slavery imposed by Christian Britain.

India's story is the story of Ireland, the story of Egypt, the story of Persia, the story of every country Britain's parasites ever coveted. The crocodile tears that bourgeois Britain sheds for Belgium deceive no one. She encouraged the Belgians to resist the all-conquering Teutons and all the help she gave them was two thousand marines, headed by the innocuous "Winnie" Churchill, to defend Antwerp—a hopeless task.

The Indians have given a new crop of martyrs to the sacred cause of liberty and their blood has not been shed in vain.

The spirit of revolt is at large in India and its terribly persecuted people are preparing for a final battle against the invaders who have starved and exploited them so long. Their problem is exceedingly well set forth in Ram Chandra's publications, *India Against Britain*, 15c; *British Rule in India*, by W. J. Bryan, 5c; *Tyranny of Indian Police*, 5c. ED GAMMONS

Society's Wives Go to Church

Pauline Smith

SOCIETY guards carefully its favorite myth, monogamy. Every man is supposed to have a wife—and nearly every man does, either a whole wife or else a part interest in one. Wives are bought in this rotten society. A supposedly first-class wife, fit for permanent use by a select gentleman, commands the price of being fed, clothed and named, with her owner's name, for life.

Then a second-class wife, good for a year's use or so by a young gentleman not wishing as yet to invest in permanent property, is paid with enough to live upon while being used, and a little consolation fund upon being discarded.

But the third-class wives—there's the rub!—the wives who are fit but for a half hour's use. These wives are purchased by poor young men who can only afford a half-hour of them, and by such rich young men as have third-class taste.

As the poor buys its coal by the bucket, so the average starveling "hall-room boy" buys his "wife" by the hour. 'Tis the best he can do.

He who can afford it gets himself a wife exclusively for his own use—just as those who can afford it have a bathroom for their exclusive use. The poor young man of the average sort whose family shares a bathroom with five other families—this young man usually, "until he gets his start," meets the sex urge by sharing a wife with twenty or forty other men with whom he is not even acquainted. One might say, they "club together," forty men sharing one wife—and her price. My God, what a filthy thing you are, Society! When I was a small girl I used to pass by the cottage of a dark-haired "public" wife. There were often a dozen men lined up at her door waiting their turns.

This is Society's third-class "wife." Society is ashamed of her and tries to make believe that there don't exist any second and third-class wives, but only the first-class kind, kept "exclusively for one's own use." Whenever Society's third-class wife indiscreetly shows her face to daylight, Society shudders and pulls its clothes about itself, if it has them on at the time, and advises the poor lady to go seek God.

* * * * *

SUDDENLY three hundred of Society's third-class wives went to church the other day, in San Francisco, looking for God. God wasn't in. Only a little preacher, a little peevish preacher who had made the mistake of talking too loudly about the third-class wives proposing half hour marriages at the door of the house of God. The third-class wives waked up, if God didn't, and three hundred of them came to church.

Church is the last place on earth that Society wants its so-called prostitutes to come—Church is the place for male prostitutes—not female.

But Society's bluff was called. The hypocritical invitation to "come to God" was accepted. Society's half-hour wives stormed the church and demanded to know whether the little minister's religion stopped at the door of the religious house.

This is probably the most dramatic scene ever brought to light in America—a thing more likely to happen in a Latin country than in stodgy Anglo-Saxon parts. The respectable city was stirred to its depths. Glaring headlines flashed the astonishing fact that three hundred "prostitutes" went to the Reverend Paul Smith's church to see him. The poor little preacher didn't know what to do, for what preacher ever does? He didn't want to associate with them and he didn't want to refuse to associate with them. The hell of it was that there were too many to send away in a patrol wagon without making the public take notice, so the poor trembling man of God took Society's wives into the church and tried to talk to them. The trouble is he tried to talk down to them and suddenly one of them asked him "What are you going to do with us when you have thrown us out onto the street? How are we to make a living?" "Will your respectable ladies see that we can have jobs with which to make a living?" "Why don't you drive us into the sea?" "Is there any place in this city where we can get a chance to live by working?" "What do you know about us, anyway?"

The Reverend Paul Smith asked, "How many of you would take a job at $8 a week?" The answer was a derisive and bitter laugh. Then Society's wife began to talk down to little Paul Smith and told him some things that he never knew before, and which he doesn't know even now.

Stumped beyond his ability to extricate himself, little Smith admitted that it was the "saddest day of his life," and he didn't recover his equilibrium and Pharisaical gall until the women were beyond the "door of God" and the power to answer the preacher. Whereupon the ecclesiastical gentleman used the newspapers, which would refuse (with the exception of *The Bulletin*) the third-class wives a chance to reply. He published an accusation (apparently false) that Mrs. Gamble, chief mouthpiece for the women, is a "vicious exploiter who had stolen $180 entrusted to her care by a girl." Then the little preacher continued his interrupted career of mental prostitution, content with having worsted the physical prostitute.

The details are of no consequence, but the event itself has been one of the most valuable for enlightenment, the most wonderful, the most wholesome as a reaction to hypocrisy, that has been seen in America in years.

The Barbary Coast is quieter now; a "vice clean-up" has staged itself, and "Vice" is holding a mask before its face till the play is over. But the event is written indelibly in history.

"Society's wife" came to God, and God wasn't in.

The Straight Road

THEY got y', kid, they got y'—just like I said they would.
You tried to walk the narrow path,
You tried, and got an awful laugh;
And laughs are all y' did get, kid—they got y' good!

They never knew the little kid—the kid I used to know;
The little bare-legged girl back home,
The little kid that played alone—
They don't know half the things I know, kid, ain't it so?

They got y', kid, they got y'—you know they got y' right;
They waited till they saw y' limp,
Then introduced y' to the pimp—
Ah, you were down then, kid, and couldn't fight!

I guess y' know what some don't know, and others know damn well—
That sweatshops don't grow angels' wings,
That workin' girls is easy things,
And poverty's the straightest road t' Hell!

—Paul Hanna

Another Radical College!

ALL schools of radical thought in San Francisco have found, at last, a comfortable, rallying centre and at the same time an opportunity to educate the public and the youth of the city to a better understanding of the big problems confronting our civilization. The new centre is the *Jack London Memorial Library and School of Social Science*, 1256 Market street.

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I'LL niver go down again to see sojers off to th' war. But ye'll see me at th' depot with a brass band whin th' men that causes wars starts f'r th' scene iv carnage.—Mr. Dooley.

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